

DAY AT THE BEACH

CONDITIONING SALT SPRAY

BY MELINDA BARNETT



For most of my life I've had my hair all one length. Bangs have come and gone, but I've stuck with a blunt cut, above or below my shoulders, always long enough to tie up in a ponytail. It was a practical cut but not very exciting. Last summer that changed. I let my hairdresser do what she had wanted to do since I've known her — I let her cut a lot of fun layers.

Not long after the haircut, I went to a family reunion, which was held at the beach. It was a hot summer day, with a salty breeze coming off the bay. By the end of the day, my hair looked and felt wonderful. I wondered if I could make a spray that would give my hair that beachy voluminous look and feel every day without destroying it.

Most salt spray recipes, not surprisingly, call for several teaspoons of sea salt. While a few days at the beach can add texture and volume to flat and uncooperative hair, it seemed to me that spraying salt directly on my hair every day might not be the best way to keep it healthy in the long run. After a little research I found that some of the recipes called for Epsom salts, which are said to cleanse both the scalp and hair shaft. After experimenting with it, I found that the addition of just $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of sea salt helped add a little extra volume to my hair, while the argan oil helped condition it.

I wanted my salt spray to have a scent, so I chose three essential oils that are said to promote healthy hair growth. The mixture smells wonderful, and since it is actually good for my hair I can use it every day.

The packaging was fun to make. My friend Brooke Bock gave me some vintage children's books and I used the pages for my labels. ❀



You Will Need

SALT SPRAY

- 1/2 cup very warm water
- 1 tsp. Epsom salt*
- 1 tsp. argan oil
- 1-2 drops ylang-ylang essential oil*
- 1-2 drops lavender essential oil*
- 1-2 drops lemon essential oil*
- Small funnel
- Small jar w/ lid*
- Spray bottles*

PACKAGING

- Cheesecloth/Unbleached muslin strips
- Decoupage medium: Ultra Matte (Plaid - Mod Podge)
- File
- Flush cutter
- Heart charms
- Paintbrush
- Patterned paper*
- Pliers: chain-nosed; round-nosed
- Scissors
- Scrap paper
- Shell beads
- String
- Typewriter
- Wire: 24-ga., silver

To Make

SALT SPRAY

Add the salts and warm water to the jar. Shake until combined. Add the essential oils and shake again. Quickly funnel into spray bottles before the mixture separates.

PACKAGING

Create a template out of newspaper or scrap paper. Make sure it goes around the entire vial and covers most of the length as well. Use your template to cut out the background pieces and adhere them to the vial with decoupage medium. Put a piece of unprinted paper into the typewriter and make the label. Tear the words out and adhere them to the background pieces. Seal the labels with decoupage medium and allow them to dry. To make the charm dangles, thread shells and other beads onto a piece of wire. Make wrapped loops at the top and bottom, incorporating a heart charm in the bottom loop. Cut and file the edges of the wire. Wrap a strip of fabric around the vial cap and secure it in place by wrapping a piece of string around it several times. Add the charms before tying it in place. Secure with a knot.

NOTES

- Be sure to shake the bottle before each use so you get both the salts and the conditioning oils.
- The lemon essential oil has slight lightening properties. Rosemary is a wonderful non-lightening alternative to the mixture listed above.
- More alternative hair-loving essential oils include thyme, clary sage, and peppermint.
- For a more dramatic lightening effect, add 1 teaspoon of lemon juice to the mixture. If you use this you must store the mixture in the refrigerator or it will only last a day or two.
- Making sure the vial is mostly covered will help block the light and extend the life of the essential oils.
- Free basic instructions for making a wrapped wire loop can be found at beaducation.com.

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